



NEWS RELEASE

Date: 12/17/2004
For Immediate Release

Contact: Candace Moore, Public Information Coordinator
Contact Phone: 208-378-5600 candy.moore@id.usda.gov

DISTANCE LEARNING TELEMEDICINE GRANT APPLICATION DEADLINE EARLIER FOR FY 2005

Boise, Idaho - The Fiscal Year 2005 Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant (DLT) application window opened on December 3, 2004, and will close on February 1, 2005. This is several months earlier than normal. Full details on this grant application are available in the Dec. 3, 2005 Federal Register. USDA is awaiting final appropriation numbers before they post the actual amounts available and will publish another Notice in the Federal Register as soon as that information becomes available. Last year USDA awarded \$24.6 million in grant funds to rural communities across the nation. Idaho had one successful applicant, St. Mary's Hospital. They received \$500,000 for telecommunications needs in northern Idaho.

Distance learning and telemedicine grants are specifically designed to provide access to education, training and health care resources for people in rural America. The DLT program funds the use of advanced telecommunications technologies to help communities meet those needs.

The grants, which are awarded through a competitive process, may be used to fund telecommunications, computer networks, and related advanced technologies.

Grant application packages will be accepted in paper or electronically and must be postmarked or received by February 1, 2005. Late applications are not eligible for FY 2005 funding.

You may obtain application guides and materials for the DLT grant program via the Internet at <http://www.usda.gov/rus/telecom/dlt/dlt.htm>. Submit electronic applications at <http://www.grants.gov> and mail paper applications to: Rural Utilities Program, US Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Room 2845, STOP 1500, Washington, DC 20250-1550. Applications should be postmarked Attention: Director, Advanced Services Division, Telecommunications Program.

The Administrator has determined the maximum amount of an application for a grant in FY 2005 is \$500,000 and the minimum amount of a grant is \$50,000.

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9173 West Barnes Drive • Suite A1 • Boise, ID 83709
Phone: (208) 378-5600 • Fax: (208) 378-5643 • TDD: (208) 378-5644 • Web: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/id>

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